

Amendments to Standards of Performance for Process Heaters and Flares at Petroleum Refineries

Fact Sheet

ACTION

- On June 1, 2012, the Environmental Protection Agency issued final amendments to the new source performance standards (NSPS) for process heaters and flares at petroleum refineries.
- With these final amendments, EPA is lifting the stay of effectiveness of the process heater and flare requirements in these standards.
- For process heaters, EPA is establishing a concentration-based emission limit for nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and a heating value-based emission limit for NO_x. EPA is also providing an alternative compliance option – a site-specific NO_x emission limit – for process heaters that have difficulty meeting the emission standards.
- For flares, EPA is establishing a suite of standards that include work practice standards and monitoring requirements. These requirements encourage flare gas recovery. For infrequently used flares, monitoring requirements are less burdensome.
- The standards provide more flexibility in meeting the NSPS requirements while achieving projected emission reductions.
- EPA estimates that, in the fifth year after promulgation, these amendments will reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) by 3,200 tons per year (tpy), emissions of nitrogen oxide (NO_x) by 1,100 tpy, and emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOC) by 3,400 tpy. EPA estimates emission reductions of 2 million tpy of CO₂ as a co-benefit.
- These emission reductions will be achieved at a capital cost of about \$460 million and net annualized cost savings of about \$79 million per year.
- EPA anticipates net benefits from SO₂ and NO_x reductions of \$320 million to \$610 million.

BACKGROUND

- On June 24, 2008, EPA issued final amendments to the NSPS for petroleum refineries, as well as separate, new standards of performance for process heaters constructed, reconstructed or modified after May 14, 2007 and for flares constructed, reconstructed or modified after June 24, 2008.
- EPA received three petitions for reconsideration of the final rule.
- On September 26, 2008, EPA granted reconsideration and issued a stay for the issues raised in the petitions regarding process heaters and flares.
- On December 22, 2008, EPA addressed those specific issues by proposing amendments to certain provisions for process heaters and flares. EPA also proposed technical corrections to the rules for issues raised in the petitions for reconsideration.

- A direct final rule issued on December 22, 2008, extended the stay of the rule until a final decision on reconsideration is reached.
- Today's action completes this reconsideration.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- To download a copy of the final action from the EPA website, go to "Recent Actions" at the following address: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/new.html>.
- Today's final rule amendments and other background information are also available either electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov>, the EPA's electronic public docket and comment system, or in hardcopy at the EPA Docket Center's Public Reading Room.
 - The Public Reading Room is located in the EPA Headquarters, Room Number 3334 in the EPA West Building, located at 1301 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC. Hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. eastern standard time, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.
 - Visitors are required to show photographic identification, pass through a metal detector and sign the EPA visitor log. All visitor materials will be processed through an X-ray machine as well. Visitors will be provided a badge that must be visible at all times.
 - Materials for this action can be accessed using Docket ID EPA-HQ-OAR-2007-0011.
- For further information about the final rules, contact Brenda Shine of the EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-3608 or shine.brenda@epa.gov.